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4-6-1990

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Recommended Citation

Joseph, Dan, "Law Students Estimate Half Joined Boycott" (1990). *Bryant Garth (1986-1987 Acting; 1987-1990)*. Paper 8.
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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Maurer School of Law
Bloomington

Law students estimate half joined boycott

By Dan Joseph
Indiana Daily Student

4/6/90
IDS

IU law students joined a nationwide boycott of classes and rallied outside the School of Law Thursday to protest the lack of tenured minority and women professors on the school's faculty.

The boycott and rally were part of the second nationwide law student strike against unequal treatment of minority and women faculty in law schools across the country.

The first, in which IU did not participate, was held April 6, 1989.

Students from about 36 law schools were scheduled to participate in Thursday's strike, including those from Harvard, Yale and the University of California at Berkeley.

Reports from IU law students and other organizers indicated that about 50 percent of the law students joined the boycott, said strike co-organizer Salvador Vasquez, a law student.

About 150 students and faculty gathered on the law school steps at 3 p.m. for the rally.

John Baker, IU's only black ten-

ured professor of law, said more pressure needs to be put on the University to hire minorities.

He said he couldn't understand why the law school had only two blacks and six women on the faculty.

"A major law school like this can not stand to have that kind of indifference to diversity," Baker said.

Early afternoon classes appeared to be far short of their full number of students, but professors and students said attendance rates varied from class to class.

Mary O'Connell, associate professor of law, said her morning class had almost perfect attendance. But only 63 of about 130 students attended O'Connell's 2 p.m. class.

The boycott's impact was somewhat diluted by several factors. Several students said they could not afford to skip classes because the strike date was too close to finals.

Some professors also were re-scheduling or videotaping classes for the boycotters' benefit, said law student Cindy Huang.

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Back page, this section



JOHN S. DIMAURO / Daily Student

Julia Lamber, one of three tenured women law professors in the IU School of Law, speaks on the steps of the law school about unequal treatment of women and minority faculty members in the school. Law students, who were striking Thursday with other law schools across the nation, gathered to listen.

Boycott

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Law student Kris Markarian said although she wasn't sure she would boycott classes, the reasoning behind the strike was good.

"If the strike is done for the right reasons, it sends a message to the professors that the student body cares about who is on the faculty and about racial issues," she said.

Markarian said she believed most students still went to classes.

Law student David Rhind said the extent of the boycott was unimportant.

"Regardless of the number of

students who boycotted classes, it was a success because it provoked thought and discussion and forced people to take a stand on an important issue," he said.

Recruitment and retention of women into the law school are two problems the law school faces, said Phyllis Klotman, dean for Women's Affairs.

"You can't bring people in and then not do something to keep them here," Klotman said.

Female professors also might have problems being seen as authority figures because they might have teaching styles that male students in particular are not accustomed to, Klotman said.

"We can't condescend to women just because they don't fit the white, male model," she said.

Bryant Garth, dean of the law school, also spoke briefly.

Garth gave no apologies for the school's record of tenuring minorities and women, but said he agreed with all the speakers' comments and was glad to see an upsurge of student activism.

Other speakers included Black Law Students' Association President Wayne Harris, Latino-American Law Students' Association Co-President Marilyn Bardie and Associate Professor of Law Julia Lamber.